

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) A network terminal constituting a network system which is made up of a plurality of network terminals being capable of transmitting and receiving data and manages transmitting and receiving of data in accordance with a synchronization information frame periodically supplied from one of said plurality of network terminals which operates as a master terminal,

said network terminal comprising:

synchronization information frame receiving means for receiving the synchronization information frame from said master terminal;

network information managing means for managing the network by being synchronized with the synchronization information frame received by the synchronization information frame receiving means;

synchronization information frame missing detection means for detecting a missing of the synchronization information frame from said master terminal, when the synchronization information frame receiving means does not receive the synchronization information frame;

synchronization information transmission start time storing means for storing synchronization information frame transmission start time information which defines a synchronization information frame transmission start time, said plurality of network terminals having different synchronization information frame transmission start times; and

synchronization information frame transmitting means for, in a case where said network terminal acts as a new master terminal of the network system, periodically outputting a synchronization information frame including at least a part of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, from the synchronization information frame transmission start time defined by the synchronization information frame transmission start time information stored in the synchronization information transmission start time storing means, synchronization information frame transmitting means starting to output the

synchronization information frame after the synchronization information frame missing detection means detects the missing of the synchronization information frame,

after the synchronization information frame missing detection means detects the missing of the synchronization information frame, the synchronization information frame receiving means awaiting for a synchronization information frame from one of said plurality of network terminals whose synchronization information transmission start time is earlier than the synchronization information transmission start time of said network terminal, until the synchronization information frame transmission start time of said network terminal comes,

the network terminal further comprising:

synchronization information frame transmission start time generating means for determining sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information corresponding to said plurality of network terminals of the network system, and transmitting the sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information to said plurality of network terminals, when said network terminal acts as a master terminal.

3. (Previously Presented) The network terminal as defined in claim 2, wherein, the synchronization information frame transmission start time information indicates priorities of said plurality of network terminals of the network system, for selecting a master terminal.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The network terminal as defined in claim 2, wherein, the synchronization information frame transmission start time information generating means determines the sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information, on ground of capabilities of said plurality of network terminals as a master terminal of the network system.

6. (Original) The network terminal as defined in claim 2, wherein, the synchronization information frame transmission start time information generating means determines the sets of

synchronization information frame transmission start time information, on ground of priorities of sets of data transmitted from said plurality of network terminals.

7. (Original) The network terminal as defined in claim 3, wherein, the synchronization information frame transmitting means determines the synchronization information frame transmission start time, on ground of a time calculated by multiplying said priorities by a predetermined unit time.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The network terminal as defined in claim 2, wherein, if it is impossible to generate a synchronization information frame including all sets of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, the synchronization information frame transmitting means determines which set of information is included in a synchronization information frame, in accordance with priorities of sets of data exchanged between said plurality of network terminals.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) A network system which is made up of a plurality of network terminals being capable of transmitting and receiving data and manages transmitting and receiving of data in accordance with a synchronization information frame periodically supplied from one of said plurality of network terminals which operates as a master terminal,

a network terminal, which is one of said plurality of network terminals, comprising:

synchronization information frame receiving means for receiving the synchronization information frame from said master terminal;

network information managing means for managing the network by being synchronized with the synchronization information frame received by the synchronization information frame receiving means;

synchronization information frame missing detection means for detecting a missing of the synchronization information frame from said master terminal, when the synchronization information frame receiving means does not receive the synchronization information frame;

synchronization information transmission start time storing means for storing synchronization information frame transmission start time information which defines a synchronization information frame transmission start time, said plurality of network terminals having different synchronization information frame transmission start times; and

synchronization information frame transmitting means for, in a case where said network terminal acts as a new master terminal of the network system, periodically outputting a synchronization information frame including at least a part of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, from the synchronization information frame transmission start time defined by the synchronization information frame transmission start time information stored in the synchronization information transmission start time storing means, synchronization information frame transmitting means starting to output the synchronization information frame after the synchronization information frame missing detection means detects the missing of the synchronization information frame,

after the synchronization information frame missing detection means detects the missing of the synchronization information frame, the synchronization information frame receiving means awaiting for a synchronization information frame from one of said plurality of network terminals whose synchronization information transmission start time is earlier than the synchronization information transmission start time of said network terminal, until the synchronization information frame transmission start time of said network terminal comes, wherein, said network terminal further comprising synchronization information frame transmission start time generating means for determining sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information corresponding to said plurality of network terminals of the network system, and transmitting the sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information to said plurality of network terminals, when said network terminal acts as a master terminal.

12. (Previously Presented) The network system as defined in claim 11, wherein, the synchronization information frame transmission start time information indicates priorities of said plurality of network terminals of the network system, for selecting a master terminal.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) A method of controlling a network terminal constituting a network system which is made up of a plurality of network terminals being capable of transmitting and receiving data and manages transmitting and receiving of data in accordance with a synchronization information frame periodically supplied from one of said plurality of network terminals which operates as a master terminal,

the method comprising the steps of:

detecting a missing of the synchronization information frame from said master terminal, when the synchronization information frame is not supplied from said master terminal;

in a case where said network terminal acts as a new master terminal of the network system, periodically outputting a synchronization information frame including at least a part of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, from the synchronization information frame transmission start time defined by the synchronization information frame transmission start time information stored in the synchronization information transmission start time storing means, after detecting the missing of the synchronization information frame; and

awaiting for a synchronization information frame from one of said plurality of network terminals whose synchronization information transmission start time is earlier than the synchronization information transmission start time of said network terminal, until the synchronization information frame transmission start time of said network terminal comes, the method further comprising:

determining sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information corresponding to said plurality of network terminals of the network system, and

transmitting the sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information to said plurality of network terminals, when said network terminal acts as a master terminal.

15. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium, storing a set of instructions, executed by a processor, causing a computer to operate as sections of a network terminal constituting a network system which is made up of a plurality of network terminals being capable of transmitting and receiving data and manages transmitting and receiving of data in accordance with a synchronization information frame periodically supplied from one of said plurality of network terminals which operates as a master terminal,

said network terminal:

receiving the synchronization information frame from said master terminal;

managing the network by being synchronized with the synchronization information frame;

detecting a missing of the synchronization information frame from said master terminal, when the synchronization information frame is not received;

storing synchronization information frame transmission start time information which defines a synchronization information frame transmission start time, said plurality of network terminals having different synchronization information frame transmission start times; and

in a case where said network terminal acts as a new master terminal of the network system, periodically outputting a synchronization information frame including at least a part of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, from the synchronization information frame transmission start time defined by the synchronization information frame transmission start time information, starting to output the synchronization information frame after detecting the missing of the synchronization information frame,

after detecting the missing of the synchronization information frame, awaiting for a synchronization information frame from one of said plurality of network terminals whose synchronization information transmission start time is earlier than the synchronization information transmission start time of said network terminal, until the synchronization

information frame transmission start time of said network terminal comes, the network terminal further

determining sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information corresponding to said plurality of network terminals of the network system, and transmitting the sets of synchronization information frame transmission start time information to said plurality of network terminals, when said network terminal acts as a master terminal.

16. (Previously Presented) The network terminal of claim 2, wherein the synchronization information frame includes at least one of a network identifier for identifying the network system, a master terminal inherent number for identifying a sender of the synchronization information frame, a synchronization information frame interval indicating when the next synchronization information frame is sent, and band guarantee period information for specifying network terminals which can transmit information to another network terminal and for guaranteeing a transmission band.

17. (New) A network terminal constituting a network system which is made up of a plurality of network terminals being capable of transmitting and receiving data and manages transmitting and receiving of data in accordance with a synchronization information frame periodically supplied from one of said plurality of network terminals which operates as a master terminal,

said network terminal comprising:

synchronization information frame receiving section receiving the synchronization information frame from said master terminal;

network information managing section for managing the network by being synchronized with the synchronization information frame received by the synchronization information frame receiving section;

synchronization information frame missing detection section for detecting a missing of the synchronization information frame from said master terminal, when the synchronization information frame receiving section does not receive the synchronization information frame;

priority list storing section for storing a priority list which defines a start time of transmission of the synchronization information frame of each of said plurality of network terminals, each of said plurality of network terminals having a different priority; and

synchronization information frame transmitting section for, in a case where said network terminal acts as a new master terminal of the network system, periodically outputting a synchronization information frame including at least a part of information in the synchronization information frame received from said master terminal, from the start time defined by the priority list stored in the priority list storing section, synchronization information frame transmitting section starting to output the synchronization information frame after the synchronization information frame missing detection section detects the missing of the synchronization information frame,

after the synchronization information frame missing detection section detects the missing of the synchronization information frame, the synchronization information frame receiving section waits for a synchronization information frame from one of said plurality of network terminals whose start time is earlier than the start time of said network terminal, until the start time of said network terminal comes,

priority list generating section determining an updated priority list including an updated priority corresponding to each of said plurality of network terminals of the network system, and transmitting the priority list to said plurality of network terminals, when said network terminal acts as a master terminal.